

# CASE STUDY DC RETROFIT



## RETROFITTING AN EXISTING SYSTEM CAN BRING NEW LIFE TO A DC.

### PROJECT SCOPE

A floor care leader and recognized name in household appliances engaged FORTE to design and plan a system that would increase efficiencies and accuracies in picking and shipping.

### OVERVIEW

The company's Texas facility was a conventional warehouse with virtually no automation. Workers built pallets using pick lists and manually delivered them to the dock where they were broken down for individual carton labeling. Each SKU or product label was then manually cross-checked with the shipping label to ensure accuracy. After the pallet was rebuilt, it would sit on the dock awaiting shipment the next day.

### OBJECTIVES

- Increase accuracy in shipping
- Improve operating method efficiency through picking
- Accomplish the above objectives using a minimum amount of dock space.

### UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

FORTE developed a new pick-by-wave system with an automated print and apply station. A new U-shaped induct conveyor moves the cartons through a scanner and down one of three divert lanes directly into a truck. FORTE strategically developed the shipping layout to double as a receiving system. Using the same equipment, product can be received and immediately palletized for storage.

An added advantage of the new design is that it allows for easy cross-docking. Cartons being cross-docked simply remain on the conveyor through the print-and-apply station and divert for immediate shipment. Equipment utilized includes an extendable receiving conveyor, U-shaped accumulation conveyor, a print-and-apply unit with a scanner, belt conveyor, pop-up wheel diverters, and three drive-out truck loaders.

### RESULTS

- Increased accuracy through automatic print and apply
- Lead time reduction through cross-docking and batch picking
- Number of touches per carton reduced from 7 to 2 if cross-docked and from 7 to 4 if batch picked and shipped
- Less dock congestion—picking by batch allows for synchronization with truck arrival, eliminating the need to stage pallets on the dock
- Increased customer service levels

**“The project's ROI met payback period requirements and had the added benefits of increased accuracies and heightened customer service levels.”**

**- Project Manager, Floor Care Leader**



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INSIDE  
THE BOX**

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